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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EU](#) [NATO](#) [OSCE](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: RUSSIA: DEMARCHE ON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND THE
CORFU MINISTERIAL

REF: SECSTATE 59226

Classified By: Acting POL M/C David Kostelancik for reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d).

Summary

¶1. (C/NF) MFA Deputy Director Gorlach welcomed reftel demarche as an important signal and expressed interest in the idea of a joint U.S.-Russian statement for the Corfu ministerial. He said that Russia would not oppose efforts to discuss the human and economic agenda, but asked for specifics and expressed concern that this could delay progress on Russia's priority, hard security. He understood our preference of the OSCE as a venue but pushed for a division of labor between other organizations, including the NRC. He put forward the possibility of creating a core group of interested parties to shepherd the EST. He highlighted that Russia wanted both classic and new security threats and responses on the agenda. He said that Russia did not have any timeframe to deliver a treaty, but that Russia would seek a legally binding instrument as the outcome. End Summary.

A Positive Signal

¶2. (C) On June 10, Deputy Director for European Cooperation Yuri Gorlach welcomed reftel demarche and said that the GOR was appreciative for the "engaged, open, and positive" U.S. approach on the European Security Treaty (EST). Calling our demarche an "important and positive political signal," he contrasted it with the initial U.S. reaction -- you rejected "our outstretched hand" and pursued an "unconstructive agenda."

¶3. (C) He agreed with our desire for a frank dialogue on security and added that we should address both "classic security threats" and new threats and challenges, e.g., drugs, piracy, and terrorism. The reason, he said, was that the EU, NATO, OSCE, the CSTO, and the SCO had competing agenda items on these new threats and that NATO, was principally a military organization, making it less appropriate to deal with matters handled better by police and special services. Even though he assessed that NATO covered new threats inefficiently, he said that it could serve as a place to exchange information.

Human and Economic Agenda: Not a Russian Priority

¶4. (C) Gorlach said that Russia would not oppose dialogue on human and economic security baskets, but that it was not Russia's first priority -- although, he asked for our concrete proposals on the human and economic agenda. Russia considered that the OSCE had made significant progress on the economic and human baskets, but had not succeeded well in the hard security arena. Thus, he argued that we should pursue a

"more rational and less ambitious agenda" on security, and expressed concern that by trying to move forward significant changes in all three baskets, it would slow progress on Russia's priority, hard security. He emphasized, however, that Russia was in "no rush" to move this process forward, "we are not in Soviet days. This is not something that needs to be done at any cost to show progress to the seniors." That said, he emphasized that Russia had learned from events in the Balkans and Georgia, i.e., it needed more than political commitments, it needed a legally binding agreement.

Going Beyond the OSCE

¶5. (C/NF) Echoing President Medvedev's recent statement on the presidential website, he said that European security demanded a "change in software, not hardware," meaning procedures and practices, not institutions. While Gorlach acknowledged our preference for discussing the EST within the OSCE, he told us that there was "added value" in going beyond and looking to a division of labor with other organizations, particularly at a "revived" NRC. Saying that Russia had "nothing against the OSCE, it was a marvelous organization," he observed that it had "obvious limitations." He again raised the possibility of forming a "core group" or a "group of interested states" which could shepherd the EST forward, and then "maybe converge" at the OSCE. He mentioned Poland, Germany, France, Switzerland, Finland, Greece, Spain, Kazakhstan, and the Baltic nations (included to "avoid suspicion") as Russia's preferred candidates for this group. He also invited the U.S. to participate.

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Welcome Joint Statement

¶6. (C/NF) Gorlach welcomed our offer to explore a joint statement on security cooperation, calling it a "very important" signal to others, noting that many European states awaited an American signal to engage on the EST discussion. He said an "uplifting joint statement" could help in building trust in the U.S.-Russia relationship. We would welcome instructions on the process and timing for developing and delivering this joint statement.

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